THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) Swajaldhara proposals are being implemented in participatory project mode. In the financial year 2002-03, the projects are sanctioned based on the proposal received from the State Governments.

(b) Among the North Eastern States only 55 Swajaldhara proposals received from Assam Government were sanctioned by National Scheme Sanctioning Committee for an outlay of Rs. 832.68 lakh.

Postponement of loan recovery by banks from drought affected farmers

†2918. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have postponed the recovery of loan by banks from the farmers in drought affected States;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the interest rate on the loans given to farmers has also been exempted by the banks to provide relief to farmers in badly hit drought affected States; and

(c) if so, the affected State-wise details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

BPL families in Uttaranchal

2919. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to refer to the answers to Unstarred Questions 1523 and 1527 given in the Rajya Sabha on 5th March, 2003 and state:

(a) the number of families living in Uttaranchal below poverty line, district-wise; and

(b) what is the criteria fixed to recognise them below poverty line especially living in far-flung areas of this State?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) As per the latest estimate available, the number of people living below poverty line in the undivided State of Uttar Pradesh during the year 1999-2000 was 412.01 lakhs. The district-wise estimates are not available. Applying the rural poverty ratio of Uttar Pradesh for the year 1999-2000 to the rural population of Uttaranchal (2001 Census), it is estimated that there would be 19.70 lakh rural persons below poverty line in Uttaranchal.

(b) Thirteen socio-economic indicators namely, Size of operational holding of land, Type of house, Average availability of normal wear clothing, Food security, Sanitation facilities, Ownership of consumer durables, Literacy status, Status of the household labour force, Means of Livelihood, Status of children, Type of indebtedness, Reasons for migration from household and preference of assistance, each having scores 0,1,2,3,4 depending on the status of the household, are to be used for working out a composite score for each rural household and the households with lower scores are to be identified as living below poverty line.

Financial viability of water desalination plants

2920. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning any water desalination plants in the country;

(b) if so, where these plants will be located and with what capacity; and

(c) the financial viability of water desalination plants in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) to (c) The drinking water supply is a State subject and all schemes are implemented by the State Government financially by providing funds under Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP). As per the information available from the State Government, State Government have approved 194 and installed 150 desalination Plants. The State Government are supported by the Government of India under Sub-Mission of ARWSP. The operation and maintenance cost of desalination plants with reverse osmosis process is very high. Therefore, State Governments prefer to go in for surface water supply from safe sources.